

South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center

2006-2007 Marketing Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center (SMPAC) offers an annual performing arts series with a variety of artistic programming that targets a wide-range of audiences from empty-nesters to families with children of various ages. It is a multi-purpose facility that serves the School District of South Milwaukee (SDSM) and the greater community.

As we continue to develop our current offerings, we will work to offer new and varied performances and events that will engage our audiences and provide them with lasting, fond memories. The SMPAC's marketing objective is to leverage recent audience growth and continue to increase patron count and ticket sales revenues by reaching beyond our core audience. We will achieve this through market research and analysis of practices already in place.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The SMPAC has experienced growth in audiences, support and overall community awareness of its existence. Its reputation is that of offering a variety of performances with high artistic quality, top-notch customer service and hospitality, and all-around enjoyable experiences. We want to take advantage of this current popularity to grow in funding and in audience.

MARKET SUMMARY

Our market is comprised of a cross-section of middle-aged to older couples and singles, and families with school-aged children. These groups want quality and value programming that is both affordable and convenient.

Target Markets

Our target markets are adults ages 35-55 and 55+, parents with children ages 5-18, and educators. These markets are based on the demographics of our market and the programming we want to provide.

Market Geographics

The market for the SMPAC is South Milwaukee and the surrounding South Shore communities—Bayview, Oak Creek, Franklin, Cudahy, Greenfield, Greendale, St. Francis, Caledonia, Kenosha and Racine (and others), as well as the greater Milwaukee and Southeast Wisconsin areas.

Market Demographics

The average age in the communities we reach is 38 years old. There is a small majority of females over males. The population is primarily Caucasian at 88%. Six percent of the population is Black or African American, 4% is Hispanic or Latino and 2% is Asian. Thirty percent has a high school diploma and 22% has some college education but no degree. Twenty percent of the population has a Bachelors degree, 8.5% has a graduate or professional degree. Thirty percent of the population is married, 22% is separated and 20% is widowed. Of the average household income, 25% earns 75,000-\$149,999, 23% earns \$50,000-\$74,999 and 16% earn \$35,000-\$49,999. The overall poverty rate is 3%. Many people in our immediate market work in manufacturing and sales. A majority of

our audience is retirees with growth happening in the 40-55 age range. Resource: The 2000 Census, <http://censtats.census.gov/pub/Profiles.shtml>.

Market Behaviors

Arts audiences are loyal customers. If they like a show, they will come back for other performances. Our audiences are loyal but they also want to pay an affordable price for their tickets. They do not respond well to added convenience fees.

Market Needs

The needs of these communities include an accessible venue that provides theatre, dance and music performances, as well as a venue for meetings and conferences, for a wide variety of interests. The programming should include performances suited for families and children, as well as programming suited for ages spanning teenagers to the elderly. These findings are based on a community round table discussion held with a consultant in February 2005.

Market Trends

As the arts become more and more commercial, and with the burst of touring Broadway shows, more and more people are becoming interested and aware of the value that live arts events has for our communities. Businesses understand that having a thriving arts community is important for attracting new employees to their area. Young families are looking for new and exciting ways to participate with their children, while also having an educational experience. Also, people are looking for fun, quality entertainment that is affordable and close to home. Of course, with the popularity of DVRs and HDTVs, home entertainment has become more sophisticated and appealing. These are nationwide trends, which we have found to be true in our markets.

Market Growth

Many people on Milwaukee's South Side are looking for convenient ways to participate in the arts. As our popularity grows and people learn that they can trust us for quality arts programming, our audiences will grow.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The following is an outline of the South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Currently our strengths and opportunities outweigh our weaknesses; however, our weaknesses punctuate our need for more of the following resources: staff and funding.

Strengths

- It's a beautiful facility
- Dedication of volunteers
- Offering an affordable arts experience
- Number of seats
- Acoustics
- Handicap accessible
- Supportive administration/school board
- Understanding school staff
- Free and easy parking
- Talented alums come back
- Location – not another PAC in vicinity
- Staff
- Supportive Board of Directors
- 25% of school population involved in arts
- 2 catering options available in house

Weaknesses

- Location – hard to find
- Limited employees
- It's in a high school
- Not enough parking
- Not enough bathrooms
- Some bad sightlines/pitch of theater
- No alcohol
- Signage
- Limited financial resources
- Sharing schedule with high school

Opportunities

- Lack of similar facilities in the area
- Excellent feedback on performances presented so far
- Good reviews from artists that have performed here
- Supportive, growing patron base
- Away from downtown
- Support from newspaper
- Establish a community theater
- Longstanding (30 year) involvement with this project
- Legacy of great music department
- Family community
- Growth in surrounding communities
- Community revitalization
- Between Racine and downtown
- Collaborations with businesses and organizations

Threats

- Location
- School funding
- Threats of arts cuts in the schools
- Lack of downtown
- Community lethargy
- Blue collar mentality; "either/or"; "people here don't like that"
- Established venues/presenting series
- Competitive experiences.
- Types of programs limited by funding

ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS

Our competition includes the Downtown Milwaukee arts scene—companies such as Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Ballet, The Skylight and Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, all of which have substantial subscriber bases. The Pabst, Milwaukee Theatre, Riverside Theatre, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Alverno College, and the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center in Brookfield are presenting theatres with long-time subscribers. All market themselves in the Journal Sentinel and the Shepherd Express. They have extensive subscription campaigns and advertise with brochures throughout the city. Also, they have extensive mailing lists through which they send newsletters, brochures, postcards and special deals on ticket prices. These theatres also advertise on local radio stations and occasionally have air time on local television stations. Prices for seats at these venues typically range from \$5 to \$145.

The good news is that we are the only theatre on the South Side that's presenting the type of performances that we are. We offer quality, affordable programming in a convenient location.

SERVICE OFFERING

The SMPAC's product is a performing arts series that offers a variety of programming targeted toward adults ages 35-55 and 55+, as well children and families. We also offer daytime school performances for educators and their students. We have a state-of-the-art theatre that is available for rentals at a lower cost than surrounding venues.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

The following we consider to be our keys to success:

- Dedicated staff, board and volunteers
- Market awareness
- Funding to support the organization
- Types and frequency of programming
- Location of facility
- Value-added opportunities surrounding performances

MARKETING STRATEGY

The SMPAC has a dedicated staff and board that will establish more and stronger relationships with patrons, community members, businesses and funding organizations in order to increase funding and awareness.

Our strategy is based on the concept that one, awareness precedes ticket sales and two, quality performances generate repeat purchases.

TARGET MARKETS

We are targeting a general audience that consists of adults, children and the elderly with an interest in entertainment and the arts. We are targeting parents of children from the ages of 5 to 18 for our family performances. We are targeting K-12 educators for our daytime school matinees. We offer a valuable experience for their students and themselves.

POSITIONING

The SMPAC offers a variety of performances for different audiences. We offer educational programming through our daytime school matinees and by presenting artists that work with students throughout the SDSM. We offer valued-added experiences for our audiences, helping to break down barriers for attending our performances and also to create lasting lifelong memories.

STRATEGY PYRAMID

Strategy

- Increase our awareness with individuals, businesses and schools to increase attendance and funding.

Tactics

- Programming.
- Contact and communication with current and potential audience members.
- Educate people about performances.

Programs to Implement our tactics:

- Program events targeted at different segments of the population.
- Meet with businesses and organizations to introduce them to SMPAC and invite them to attend a performance.
- Regularly provide students in the district with information in their weekly folders.
- Develop events surrounding performances to inform and entice people to attend.
- Advertise appropriately.